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8 February 1955

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SUMMARY

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SOVIET UNION

1. American embassy reports on current status of top Soviet leadership:

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The American embassy in Moscow reports that, as of 6 February, Malenkov's name had not been mentioned once by speakers at the current Supreme Soviet session. Khrushchev, on the other hand, had been named by over half the speakers, although all of their references have not been carried in the press summaries of the debates.

The repeated requests of the Hearst newspaper group now in the USSR to see Premier Malenkov have so far been ignored, although they have already seen Molotov and Khrushchev and have been promised interviews with Defense Minister Bulganin, Marshal Zhukov, and even Stalin's daughter, Svetlana.

Comment: Kingsbury Smith, in his release, reported Khrushchev as saying flatly that Western speculation on differences between himself and Malenkov is wishful thinking and illustrating this with a story showing that interpretation is a highly subjective process. The many references to party secretary Khrushchev by the second-level officials at the Supreme Soviet session constitute the strongest indication to date that Khrushchev may now be the top figure within the collective leadership. The Supreme Soviet will continue in session several days longer, and the speakers at these sessions, one of whom will deliver an address on foreign affairs, may well shed further light on Malenkov's status.

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NEAR EAST - AFRICA

25X1A 3. Eden favors Iraqi proposal for treaty with US and Britain:

[redacted] Foreign Secretary Eden takes a favorable view of the Iraqi proposal that the United States and Britain sign a pact with Turkey and Iraq in March or April. According to the Foreign Office, Eden feels that this matter is of great urgency.

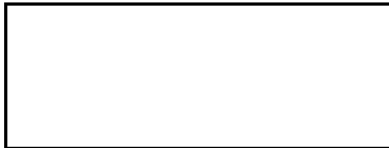
Comment: Such an arrangement would be an important step toward Britain's goal of Western participation in any regional defense agreement for the Middle East. Britain may believe it will retain under a multilateral arrangement some of the rights it has under the Anglo-Iraqi treaty of 1930, which expires in 1957.

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25X1A⁴ Comment on Iraqi-Egyptian test of strength:



The inability of the Cairo conference of Arab prime ministers, which ended on 6 February, to resolve the struggle between Egypt and Iraq over the latter's proposed pact with Turkey suggests that the Arab world will now be split into two or more camps.

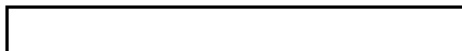
Egypt, supported by Saudi Arabia and Yemen, appears headed toward neutralism and possibly toward an active anti-Westernism. The remaining Arab states tend to support Iraq's position. Egypt and Saudi Arabia will intensify their campaign to prevent any Arab alignment with Baghdad and to overthrow the Iraqi government and that of any Arab state seeking to follow its lead.

Iraq, which for the moment holds the psychological advantage by having flouted Egypt's hegemony over the Arab world, may retain the initiative if it concludes immediately the proposed treaty with Turkey.

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